Introduction to Chakras

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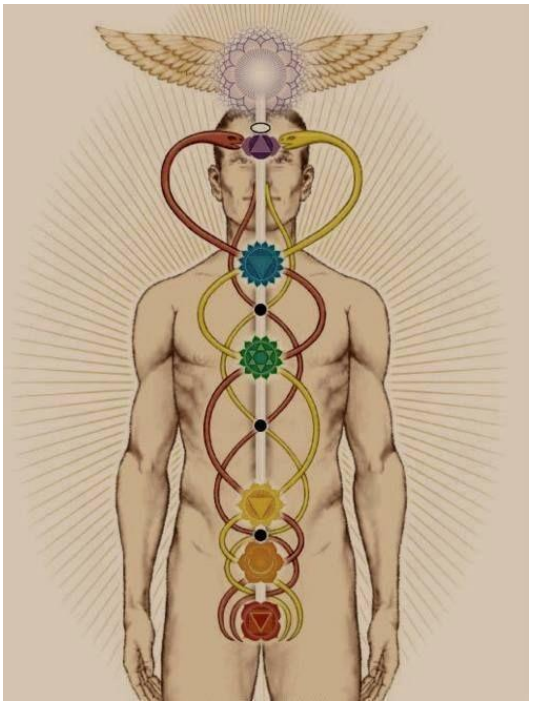
What Are Chakras?

'thus the chakra is seen to be an intermediary for energy transfer and conversion between the two neighboring dimensions of being, as well as a centre facilitating the energy conversion between a body and its corresponding mind.' Hiroshi Motoyama



Chakra is a Sanskrit word meaning wheel, or vortex, and it refers to each of the seven energy centers of which our consciousness, our energy system, is composed. These chakras, or energy centers, function as pumps or valves, regulating the flow of energy through our energy system. The functioning of the chakras reflects decisions we make concerning how we choose to respond to conditions in our life. We open and close these valves when we decide what to think, and what to feel, and through which perceptual filter we choose to experience the world around us.

The chakras are not physical. They are aspects of consciousness in the same way that the auras are aspects of consciousness. The chakras are more dense than the auras, but not as dense as the physical body. They interact with the physical body through two major vehicles, the endocrine system and the nervous system. Each of the seven chakras is associated with one of the seven endocrine glands, and also with a group of nerves called a plexus. Thus, each chakra can be associated with particular parts of the body and particular functions within the body controlled by that plexus or that endocrine gland associated with that chakra.

All of your senses, all of your perceptions, all of your possible states of awareness, everything it is possible for you to experience, can be divided into seven categories. Each category can be associated with a particular chakra. Thus, the chakras represent not only particular parts of your physical body, but also particular parts of your consciousness.

When you feel tension in your consciousness, you feel it in the chakra associated with that part of your consciousness experiencing the stress, and in the parts of the physical body associated with that chakra. Where you feel the stress depends upon why you feel the stress. The tension in the chakra is detected by the nerves of the plexus associated with that chakra, and transmitted to the parts of the body controlled by that plexus. When the tension continues over a period of time, or to a particular level of intensity, the person creates a symptom on the physical level.

The symptom speaks a language that reflects the idea that we each create our reality, and the metaphoric significance of the symptom becomes apparent when the symptom

is described from that point of view. Thus, rather than saying, "I can't see," the person would describe it as keeping themselves from seeing something. "I can't walk," means the person has been keeping himself or herself from walking away from a situation in which they are unhappy. And so on.

The symptom served to communicate to the person through their body what they had been doing to themselves in their consciousness. When the person changes something about their way of being, getting the message communicated by the symptom, the symptom has no further reason for being, and it can be released, according to whatever the person allows themselves to believe is possible.

Understanding the chakras allows you to understand the relationship between your consciousness and your body, and to thus see your body as a map of your consciousness. It gives you a better understanding of yourself and those around you.

Beyond The Physical:

The chakras act as a gateway between the different aspects of the self:

Physical self Emotional self Mental self Spiritual self

They receive and interpret information that is transmitted by a higher frequency from the more subtle aspects of our being. They process this energy making it accessible to the body. So they convert it into chemical/hormonal/nervous information that the body can respond to on the physical level. So the chakras are responsible for the cellular changes within the body.

Eg: Gross = radio
Subtle = radio waves

So the whole of our physical existence, what we see, touch ect.

The material world = manifestation of more subtle energies.

Aura

Surrounding body we have a psychic sphere of energy. This sphere is made up of different levels or Koshas (Sanskrit for sheath). These levels interpenetrate each other but you could say that they are divided into 5 different layers. The prana flows through these layers, manifesting

slightly differently in each layer. At physical layer – provides energy to drive the body, make it work. As we go through the layers, the energy becomes for subtle and harder to perceive with the intellect.

Chakras

Chakras form a ladder. When we are born we are incarnated in to the root chakra. When conceived, we enter through the crown and whilst developing in the womb, steadily move downwards from the highest plane (crown) to the base at birth.
We go through life – gradually raising our awareness back up until death. In the same way that the koshas become more and more subtle as they get closer to our true self, so do the chakras.

Each of the levels of existence within the chakras is equally important. The lowest root chakra is what enables us to feel comfortable in our bodies and with ourselves. So it is the foundation for further growth. Most people do not evolve further than the first three chakras.

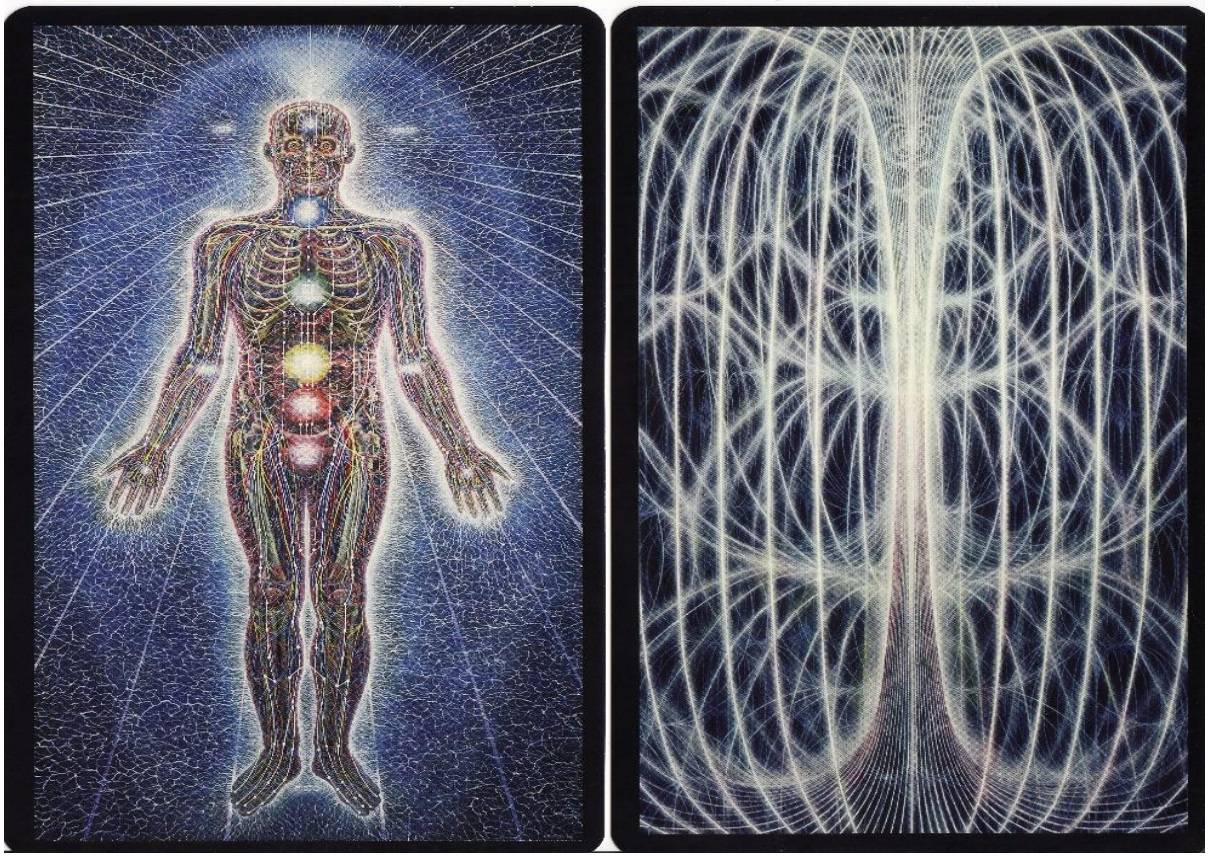
You can look at each of the chakras has an **emotional and spiritual lesson** to be learned and applied to life. Degree of success at understanding this lesson will determine the energy flow within that chakra and affect the part of the body that corresponds to it. Avoiding the lesson can block that chakra. So if the chakra is not fully open, then over time it can vibrate in a disharmony, which is the steam of all dis-ease.

Health of The Chakras

An easy way to determine which chakras are blocked is to pay attention to which parts of your body get tight or begin to hurt when stressed.
For example, if you have a headache, look towards your 6th chakra also known is the ajna If there is throat problems there is usually some discord happening in the 5th chakra also known as vishudhi, if your heart is pumping too fast that would connect with the 4th chakra or the anahata chakra etc. Where ever there is a problem manifesting in your body that would be the associated chakra to look at.

Picture of the energetic body (Left)
A depiction on how energy moves through our bodies (right).

Paintings by Alex Grey



The First Chakra Is Known As:
Muladhara Chakra or Root Chakra
Mula (root) adhara (support)

Location: Base of tailbone – (perineum)
between genitals and anus

Corresponds with:

Being grounded both to the Earth and in your physical body
Survival
Primitive instincts
The physical body
Your family roots and connection with your family
Feeling Nourished
Feeling Safe

Element: Earth

Colour: Red

Glands: Adrenals
Hormones regulating metabolism of fats, proteins and carbs. Regulates body fluids. Produces adrenaline, for flight or fight (primitive survival)

Sense: Smell
Connected to limbic system, most primitive
system.

Body Parts Associated:

Rules the legs, feet, bones, muscles and the large intestine.

Seed Sound:Lung
Nerve

Plexus:Coccygeal

Central Issue: Survival

Chakra Balance

When the energy is strong and balanced:

- We feel a sense of equilibrium
- We feel grounded, connected to the earth
- Our thinking is clear
- Highly physical
- Always find time to connect with nature
- Strong muscles
- We trust all is happening is perfect divine order
- Good Survival instincts and strong personal boundaries
- A healthy relationship to our family, our tribe

When the energy is excessive:

- We become to materialistic, the need to have more and never be contented with what we have.
- Body becomes tough, too solid and rigid.
- The boundaries we have developed in the social world become barriers, which few are allowed to traverse.
- Self – centered.
- Bullying others.
- Greedy, thinking from a place of lack.

When the energy is depleted:

- Emotionally needy.
- Low self-esteem.
- Stability and strength is lacking, easy to lose focus.
- Physical health may be weak, lacks endurance.
- Feeling uncomfortable in the body.
- Finds it's easier to sit and think about something instead of doing it.
- Fearful of survival become dominate.
- We experience more doubt in our thoughts, towards our self and life. We fail to see our worth, while our boundaries are weak.

Exercise Suggestions:

1) Earth Breathing

Stand in Tadasana

Inhale arms up – visualize Earth energy coming through your feet to the base chakra
Exhale arms down – visualize any dark energy within you leaving and flowing into soil
Imagine the solidity of the earth, its mass and density. Imagine its transformative powers to transmute your energy into positivity.
Any standing poses.

2) Sound Practice Nada Yoga

Sounding *Lung* the seed sound for Muladhara for 15-30 minutes. Concentrating on the root chakra. Where the mind goes the energy flows. If you practice this each day for 7-10 days you will feel the benefits.

Affirmations:

I am always safe.
I am connected to the Earth.
I trust the process of life.
I accept my body and all that I am.
I appreciate the learning opportunities my family gives me.
I am connected to all life.
I am willing to be my own good mother and look after myself properly at all times. I am responsible for the quality of my life.

Write Your Own Personal Affirmations: (Write them in present tense)

The Second Chakra Is Known As:
Svadhistana Chakra Or Sacral Chakra
Sva – vital force/soul
Adhistana – seat/abode

Location:

In the region of the sexual organs, just below the navel.

Corresponds with:

Emotions and desire
Sexuality
Creativity
Pleasure
Because it opens downwards into the Earth chakra, it affects our connection to our physical environment and our social awareness and relationships.

Element: Water

Colour: Orange

Glands: Ovaries and testes

Sense: Taste

Associated Body Parts:

Womb, kidneys, reproductive system, circulatory system and bladder.

Seed Sound: Vung

Nerve Plexus: Sacral

Central Issue: Guilt

Chakra Balance

When the energy is strong and balanced:

- Very good social skills, capable of going with the flow, easy to get along with others.
- Very open minded, adaptable to all sorts of social situations and accepting of a large variety of ideas.
- Very nurturing and appreciative of others.
- Comfortable with touch, sensuality and sexuality.
- Finds a balance between work and play, and likes physical movement, particularly if it is playful, as in dancing or swimming.
- Feel safe, confidant and emotionally, balanced in social situations.
- Is capable of assimilating knowledge from various sources and blending it into an acceptable format.
- Enjoys the arts and entertainment, especially when they are interactive.

When the energy is excessive:

- Tends to over-indulgence in many sensual pleasures, such as eating for the sake of eating, entertainment, and social gossip.
- Sexually overactive, sometimes to the point of addicted.
- Too socially active and has inability to spend time alone or be still.
- Becomes confused from picking up others peoples energy and reacts to others peoples expectations,
- Full of self gratification and easily addicted to stimulants or adrenaline rushes,
- Can become crisis oriented in order to get attention
- Easily puts others ahead of self to the point of forgetting personal needs and is often overly influenced by the cultural web in the social world

When the energy is depleted:

- Physical body may become tight and rigid with no sense of fluid movement.
- Displays inability to go with the flow and is not adaptable to change.
- May seem emotionally cold or impersonal, socially incapable of relating, sexually frustrated.
- Self –esteem is low socially.
- May be indecisive, passive and have no social boundaries.
- Slow to take action and easily procrastinate with any projects.
- Lack of passion, sensuality and not expressive of feelings.

Exercises: The practice of forward folds in Asana Poses.

Affirmations:

I let go and see the perfection of all that unfolds.

I am good enough to have what I want.

I release my negative attitudes, which block my experience of pleasure.

It is safe for me to allow pleasure, sweetness, and sensuality into my life.

I allow abundance and prosperity into my life.

I give myself permission to enjoy my sexuality fully.

I embrace my creativity.

Write Your Own Personal Affirmations: (Write in present tense)

The Third Chakra Is Known As:
Manipura Chakra or Solar Plexus

City of Jewels

Location: At the navel centre.

Corresponds With:

Will Power
Anger
Self esteem
Transformation
Ability to digest, food and ideas, events
Ego
Play

Element: Fire

Colour: Yellow

Glands: Pancreas

Sense: Sight

Associated Body Parts:

Digestive system, liver, spleen, stomach, small intestine.

Seed sound: Rung

Nerve Plexus: Solar

Central Issue: Shame

Chakra Balance

When the energy is strong and balanced:

- A great leader.
- Takes action, makes things happen.
- Friendly disposition in the social world, lively, with a good sense of humor.
- Responsible, conscientious and generous in most situations.

- Has a good sense of self and is confident in her/his abilities.
- Individual with good creative expression.
- Strong will-power but with healthy manners.
- Successful in planned projects.
- Healthy and physically active with a joy for life.

When the energy is excessive:

- Can be come become intolerant, argumentative and controlling; inflated ego.
- Can be bossy, stubborn and tendency towards aggression; challenging authorities.
- Lack of consideration for others, especially if they are in the way of the individual's plan.
- Tendency to be careless and overly daring.
- Single minded, perhaps tunnel vision ambitions that lead to workaholic.
- May be deceitful or manipulative to attain goals.
- High metabolism may have too much energy and have a difficult time relaxing or slowing down, or harnessing the mind.
- Scattered in creative ideas; pleasure seeking to the point of indulgence and addiction.

When the energy is depleted:

- Lack of motivation
- Physically not active; may feel sense of fatigues or tiredness; digestive weakness or problems.
- Not very high in self confidence of one's abilities; doubtful about skills or talents.
- Does not have a strong sense of self or individuality, maybe quite indecisive.
- Little creativity, and quite shy of doing anything out of the ordinary.

Exercises:

Kapalabhati or Bhastrika Pranayama.
Vinyasa or a more dynamic asana practice

Affirmations :

I am strong and have the willpower to manifest anything I choose.
I believe in myself to manifest anything I desire.
I accept all situations as part of the perfect plan.
I reclaim my willpower back from _____.
I love and approve of myself.
I honor myself.

Write Your Own Personal Affirmations: (Write in present tense)

The Forth Chakra Is Known As:
Anahata or Heart Chakra

Unstruck Sound

Location:

At the heart centre, between 4th and 5th thoracic vertebra

Corresponds With:

Love and compassion. Our ability to give and receiving love equally. The lower three centers are concerned with personal energy and pleasure through worldly experiences. The heart energy is higher and less concerned with the personal sense of self. The path towards higher consciousness begins at this level. Our ability to love unconditionally and not to be attached comes from this centre.

Element: Air

Colour: Green

Glands: Thymus

Sense: Touch

Associated Body Parts:

Lungs, heart, arms and hands.

Seed Sound: Yung

Nerve Plexus: Cardiac

Central Issue: Grief

Chakra balance

When the energy is strong and balanced:

- Healthy immune system, radiant glow, draws toward the healing arts.
- Very compassionate and empathetic towards all beings, tendency to emanate universal love.

- Friendly and loving towards others: joyful expression: non-judgmental and accepting of all people.
- Sense of self-love and confidence.
- Takes pleasure in people and life; enjoys helping others.
- Very intuitive and sensitive to other people's feelings and emotional states.
- Practical, organized and analytical towards projects/ goals; perseveres in life.
- Reliable and dependable.

When the energy is excessive:

Has such strong outward movement of energy that very little can get in. This depletes the core which tries to replenish itself through connection to others but it the same excessive way that caused the depletion. It is not an excess of love but an excessive use of love for our own needs.

- May be smothering with affection for others, and may become overly dependent and needy in relationships
- Might be overly sensitive and distrustful
- May become deceitful or manipulative in words and actions
- Poor boundaries, overly sacrificing, demanding and jealous
- Perhaps burden with subconscious feelings of guilt or deep inner sadness

When the energy is depleted:

Boundaries become rigid which prevents the outward flowing of energy, resulting in isolation, which perpetuates the deficiency.

- Out of touch with emotional feelings.
- Lack of compassion and difficulty in forgiving others
- Emotionally withdrawn, cold and lacking in intimacy
- Fear of intimacy
- Tendency toward self-pity, depression
- Discontented, negative outlook
- Grief

Exercises: The practice of backbends in Yoga asana poses.

Flapping Wings

1) Stand with your arms stretched out to the sides.
2) Open your chest as you inhale and stretch your arms backward, drawing the shoulder blades together and allowing the chest to rise.

3) Exhale with a ah sound as you bring the arms forward, touching the palms as you curve the spine and round the back.
4) Repeat for several slow deep breaths, focusing your awareness in the heart centre.

Affirmation:

I embrace unconditional love and compassion.

I love and approve of myself just the way I am.

I full and completely accept and love all of myself.

I am love and radiate love to all beings.

I open my self to receive love.

It feels good to give love.

Write Your Own Personal Affirmations: (Write in present tense)

The Fifth Chakra Is Known As Vishuddhi Or The Throat Chakra

Purity

Location: The throat

Corresponds With:

Communication. This is our centre of communication and our ability to express ourselves both verbally and creatively. This chakra transmits the intentions of the soul. It is the vehicle for speaking the truth that is in your heart. It is where the compassion of the heart unites with the higher mental faculties.

Element Colour: Bright blue

Glands: Thyroid and parathyroid

Sense: Hearing

Associated Body Parts:

Neck and shoulders.

Seed Sound: Hung

Nerve Plexus: Cervical plexus

Central Issue: To Lie

Chakra balance

When the energy is strong and balanced:

- Expressive and able to communicate clearly
- Resonant voice, good at listening
- Good sense of timing and rhythm
- Inspirational, loves to explore new ideas, leadership qualities
- Drawn to study and acquire knowledge
- Drawn to travel and exploration of new places as well as ideas
- Creative

When the energy is excessive:

Excessive fifth chakra expresses randomly from the surface personality without connection to the core. Talking is used as defense to stay in control.

- Excessive talking, which could be loud
- Poor listening skills, interrupting
- May not be truthful, the need to talk leads to fabrication
- Can easily become overly impulsive, scattered and chaotic
- Gossiping, could be argumentative

When the energy is depleted:

Energy that attempts to move outwards tends to swirl backwards towards the core and outside communication coming in triggers a contraction of fear. Poor expression, especially in personal matters.

- Voice and expression might be blocked, weak and timid
- Problems in communication, lacking in creative expression
- Blockage with singing and exploring creative sound
- Fear of speaking
- Difficulty putting feelings into words
- Introversion, shyness
- Poor rhythm, tone deaf

Exercises:

Side to side *This simple exercise opens up the neck and stimulates the thyroid gland.*

1. Lie comfortably on your back: inhale deeply.
2. Exhale and slowly turn your head to the left.
3. Inhale as your head returns to the centre.
4. Exhale as your head turns to the right.
5. Continue this exercise for one minute, gently stretching your neck from side to side.

Bridge

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor and your arms down beside the body.
2. Inhale and gently raise the arms overhead whilst you raise the pelvis off the floor sliding up the back one vertebra at a time.
3. Exhale and lower your body and arms back down.
4. Continue for one minute feeling into the throat centre.

Affirmations:

I always communicate my truth with love.
I choose to speak my truth always.
I listen to others truth with compassion.
I effortless express my truth and listen to others with love.

Write Your Own Personal Affirmations: (Write in present tense)

The Sixth Chakra Is Known As:
Ajna Chakra Or Third Eye
'To Know'

Location:
The brow
Just above the bridge of the nose.

Corresponds With:

Our intuition. This is thought of as the command centre for the whole being. A sense of knowing that by passing the ordinary senses.

Element: Mind space – light

Colour: Indigo

Glands: Pituitary

Sense: Internal guidance through pure thought

Body Parts : The Brain

Seed Sound: Om

Nerve Plexus: Cavernous plexus

Central Issue: Illusion

Chakra balance

When the energy is strong and balanced:

- Perceptive
- Imaginative
- Clear thinking, can easily focus
- Able to visualize
- Good intuition and discernment
- Able to access and remember dreams
- Able to think symbolically

When the energy is excessive:

Poor discernment means one is overly bombarded with psychic input, diminishing clear seeing. Having excessive energy does not mean has more psychic ability as this requires the ability to ground information, discern and use wisely.

- Difficulty focusing and concentrating
- Delusions, obsessions
- Lack of discernment, to ready to believe any psychic phenomenon
- Unaware, spiritually disconnected
- Nightmares

When the energy is depleted:

An excessive boundary keeps one from seeing out. Self-reflection is very narrow and egotistical.

- Insensitive
- Poor memory and poor vision
- Difficulty seeing future or imagining alternatives
- Lack of imagination
- Difficulty visualizing
- Can't remember dreams
- Denial (can't see what is going on)

Exercises

Awakening the eye

1) Sit with your legs crossed so that one heel presses into the area of the perineum.
2) Place your hands on your knees keeping your spine straight.
3) Concentrate at a point between your eyebrows. Begin to alternatively contract and relax the pelvic floor muscles as you inhale and exhale.
4) Next imagine prana being absorbed into the Ajna centre on the inhalation. On the exhalation imagine prana as a stream of light radiated outwards into the universe. Chant the mantra Om.

When this exercise begins to take effect you will feel the perineum becoming hot: at the same time a similar sensation will be experienced between the eyebrows.

Clearing The Mind

This exercise stimulates the pituitary gland.

1) Sit in a comfortable position with your hands on the floor behind you.
2) Spread the fingers so that you are aware of slight pressure within your wrists.
3) Bring your head back and whilst breathing rhythmically, become aware of the Ajna centre.
4) On the inhalation imagine that white light is passing in through the third eye.
5) As you exhale imagine it passing out.

Affirmations:

My intuition is awake and guides me.

I listen to the inner guidance.

I am clear in my thoughts.

Write Your Own Personal Affirmations: (Write in present tense)

The Seventh Chakra Is Known As Sahasrara or the Crown Chakra

'Thousand Petal Lotus'

Location:
The Crown

Corresponds With:

Our connection with Spirit.

Element: None, pure emptiness

Colour: Violet or White light

Glands: Pineal

Sense: Enlightenment

Body Parts:

Cerebral cortex / whole body

Seed Sound: Silence

Nerve Plexus: Meridian Plexus

Chakra balance

When the energy is strong and balanced:

- Ability to perceive, analyze and assimilate information
- Intelligent, thoughtful and aware
- Open minded, able to question
- Has a sense of spiritual connection
- Reflective and calm
- Enjoys meditation and other peaceful activities

When the energy is excessive:

Everything goes up into the head and out of the top of the crown with little or no descending current, which makes us out of touch with body and emotions.

- Over-intellectualization, building the ego
- Confusion because too much information and no clarity
- Dissociation from body ungrounded, too much mental energy
- Spiritual beliefs and practices may be taken to extreme.

When the energy is weak and depleted:

The rising current of energy is blocked from completion and there is no ability to transform. Patterns in life will repeat over and over.

- Ruled by unconscious
- Spiritual cynicism
- Learning difficulties
- Rigid belief systems
- Apathy

Exercise

Communion of Light

1) Sit with a straight spine.
2) Inhale and imagine raising the prana from the muladhara up to the sahasrara in a steady stream of light. Do this on a long in breath.
3) Imagine an aperture opening at the top of your head. Let the energy stream out into the universe.
4) Visualize the energy merging with the source of all life in whatever way you conceive this.

Affirmations:

I am completely connected to the divine.
I am one with all life.
I am light and love embodied in human form.

Write Your Own Personal Affirmations: (Write in present tense)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____